

Reporter

ST. CHARLES COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

St. Charles County Supports District Goals

Through partnerships and the co-sponsoring of events, the county and the district provide information to county residents about storm water control, clean water resources and recycling—all in an effort to improve and protect water sources in the community.

Recent activities include:

The Quail Ridge Demonstration Rain Garden. Residents are invited to visit Quail Ridge County Park in Wentzville to see a rain garden that was constructed to capture storm water runoff from a pavilion. The hope is that residents will learn how to install a rain garden on their own properties, capturing runoff from their home rooftops. See the article on this page.

The NACD Stewardship Poster Contest. The county displayed the winning posters in the County Administrative Building on North Second Street in St. Charles during Earth Day and Stewardship Week.



Production of Informational Pamphlets: The SWCD produces two or three informational pamphlets each year for residents of the county. Topics have included an Educational Resource List, Yard Waste Disposal, and Storm Water Control.



Recycling: The county promotes recycling through two Recycle Works centers. The latest news is that both centers will now accept polystyrene foam (Styrofoam).

The Division of Environmental Health and Protection announced last month that EPC Inc., secured a grant from the St. Louis-Jefferson Solid Waste Management District to purchase a machine that compresses the foam into bricks that are one-sixteenth the size of the original material. EPC Inc., is working with the county to offer this service free of charge.



Recycle Works Central is located at 60 Triad South Drive in St. Charles. Recycle Works West is located at 2110 E. Pitman Ave., in Wentzville. For a list of accepted items, visit www.scchealth.org/es or call 636-949-7415.



Demonstration Rain Garden Installed at Quail Ridge

The St. Charles County SWCD partnered with the St. Louis SWCD and St. Charles County Parks to install a demonstration rain garden at Quail Ridge County Park in Wentzville, April 17. Community residents were invited to attend a brief workshop before the planting, where they learned the function and purpose of a rain garden. Details of determining slope, rain garden size and plant selection were also presented.

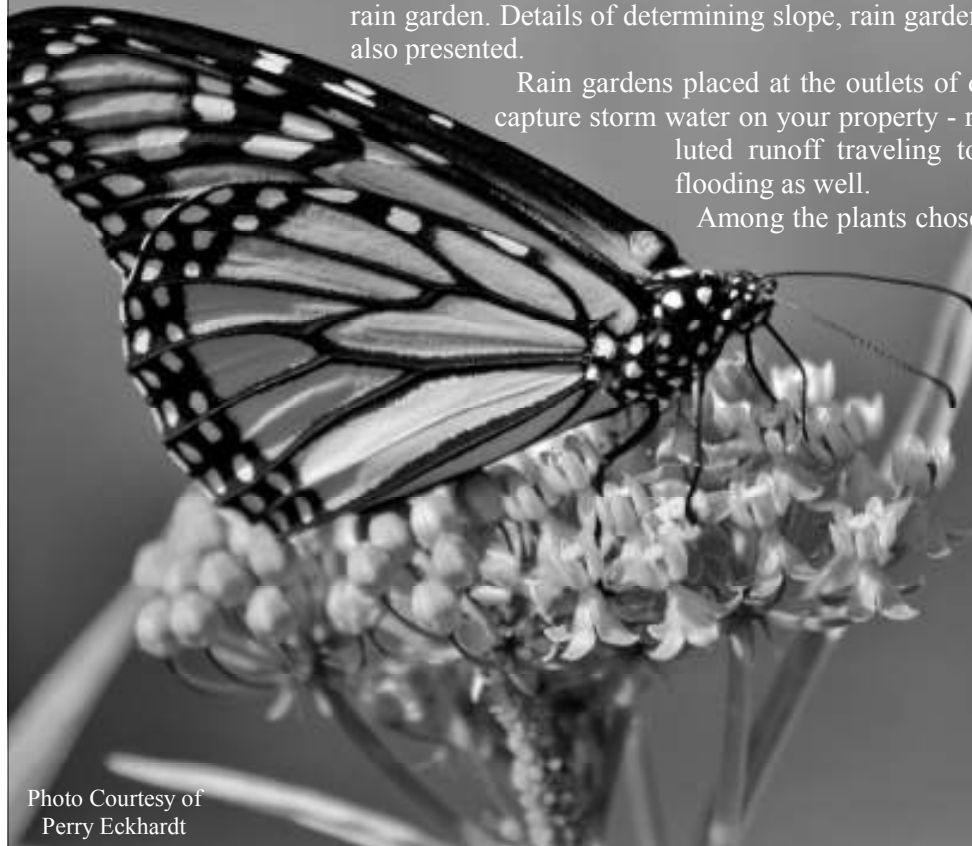


Photo Courtesy of Perry Eckhardt

Rain gardens placed at the outlets of downspouts are a wise way to capture storm water on your property - reducing the possibility of polluted runoff traveling to area streams, and reducing flooding as well.

Among the plants chosen for this project were Black-eyed Susan, Shining Blue Star, Rose Turtlehead, Copper Iris, Fringed Sedge and Fox Sedge. After an unusually heavy rainfall, the garden proved to be doing its job, slowing down the runoff and allowing it to seep slowly back into the soil.

The rain garden will serve as a permanent demonstration for county residents to visit and learn how to construct their own rain gardens.



The Rain Garden site was chosen to capture storm water coming off a pavilion in the park. The soil was amended with sand and compost, and the border was laid out (left). Carol Grote of the University of Missouri Extension's Master Gardeners spoke to the group about wise plant choices (right). Planting was quick work with many hands (below, right). After a heavy rain, it was obvious that the garden was doing its job (below).



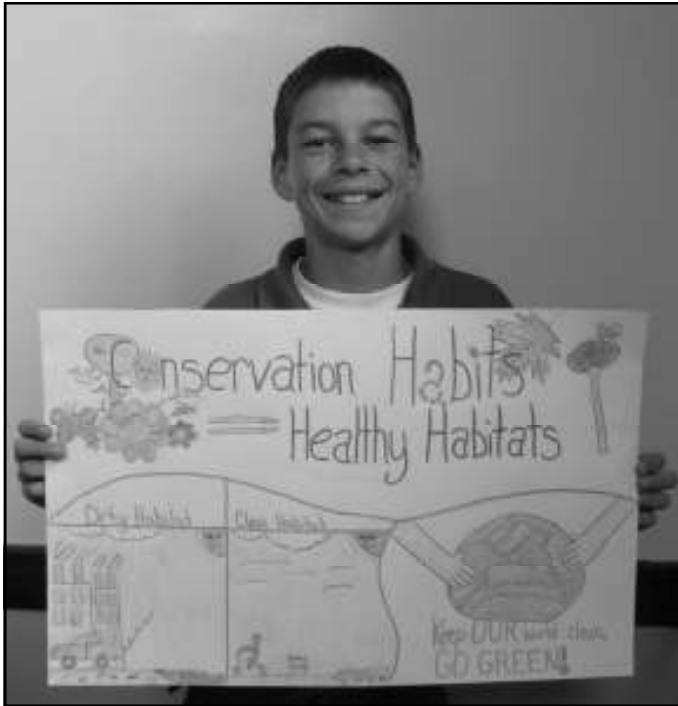
Cost-share Dollars Available for FY2010

The St. Charles County Soil & Water Conservation District has received an allocation of \$28,589.89 for FY2011. Farmers and Landowners can apply for these funds through the cost-share program, which assists landowners and operators in putting soil conservation and water quality practices on the ground. This important work results in a partnership between the SWCD and landowners in an effort to preserve productive soil and clean water, and in the process improve the environment for plants, animals and people.

See Page 4 for a description of Resource Concerns and Cost-Share Practices... and How You Can Participate.



Students Win Prizes in Poster Contest



Charlie Weston (left), a sixth-grader at All Saints Catholic School in St. Peters, created the grand prize winning poster for the annual Stewardship Poster Contest, sponsored locally by the Soil and Water District. Charlie's poster will be entered in a statewide contest as part of the National Association of Conservation District's annual contest.

This year's theme is "Conservation Habits = Health Habitats". St. Charles County students in grades 4, 5, and 6 were invited to create a poster depicting the theme with both words and pictures. One hundred posters were submitted, with the top winning students pictured below. Winners received cash prizes, and all participants received lollipops and pencils.

The posters were on display at the County Administrative Building during Conservation Stewardship Week and Earth Day.



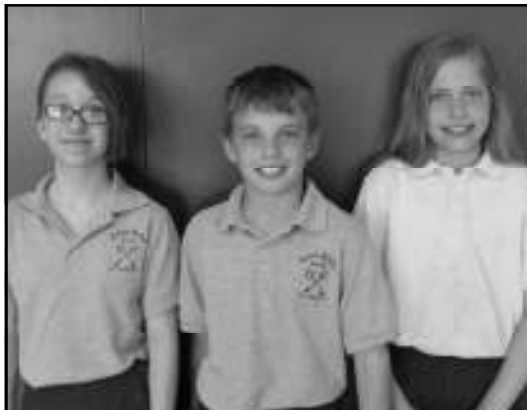
St. Charles Borromeo School student winners are: (from left) Anna Gerstenkorn, third place for fourth grade; Michael Jones, third place for sixth grade; McKenzie Gross, second place for sixth grade; and Colleen Schuchardt with Best in School.



Miranda Gerringer (right) earned first place for sixth grade entrants, and Madison Peine was awarded Best in School. Both girls attend All Saints in St. Peters.



St. Joachim and Ann student winners are: (from left) Danny Geringer, first place; Nick Lovett, Best in School; Abby Naumann, second place; and Olivia Kaufmann, third place. All are fifth grade students.



Dylan Wright (center) took first place for fourth grade. Sixth-grader Ashley Wingerter (left) was awarded Best in School, and Laura Maxwell took second place for fourth grade. All are students at St. Peter School in St. Charles.

News



Energize Missouri has 1,800 Applicants for new program

The state's Division of Energy recently announced that there were 1,800 applicants across the state for the Energize Missouri Agriculture program, a new cost-share grant that encourages and aids farmers in installing energy saving practices and equipment on their farms.

There is \$3,000,000 budgeted for the program, but there was \$6,800,000 requested by applicants. The Technical Review Team for the program will determine which applicants will receive the grants. Farmers will be notified by mail during the month of June.

\$25 Million to Restore Wetlands

The USDA's Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) has more than \$25 million to help Missouri landowners restore wetlands.

Most of the available funds are part of a \$175 million package announced May 14 by Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack that will restore about 75,000 acres of wetlands in 22 states through NRCS's Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP).

Missouri's portion of the funding is expected to help landowners add 9,200 acres to the state's 800,000 acres of wetlands. Last year, WRP easements totaling \$5.9 million were approved that will restore 3,025 acres of wetlands in Missouri.

"We are hoping to significantly increase WRP applications this year," said Kevin Dacey, Missouri NRCS natural resources specialist. "More people are becoming interested in taking advantage of the Wetlands Reserve Program as an opportunity to convert marginal farmland, and we want to assist them in a timely manner."

Wetlands are areas saturated by water all or most of the year. Often called "nature's kidneys," wetlands naturally filter contaminants out of the water. Wetlands also recharge groundwater; reduce flooding and soil erosion; support diverse populations of wildlife, plants and fish; improve aesthetics; and offer recreational opportunities.

At one time, wetlands covered 4.8 million acres of Missouri, primarily in the "Bootheel" region of southeastern Missouri. They began to decline in the late 1800s amid competing land uses, and today 800,000 acres remain. That total includes more than 130,000 acres of wetlands that have been restored in Missouri through WRP.

WRP provides technical and financial assistance to eligible landowners to increase wetlands. The voluntary program strives to achieve the greatest wetland functions and values and to receive optimum wildlife habitat benefits on every acre enrolled. WRP participants limit their future use of the land, but retain private ownership.

Participating landowners can select permanent easements that provide a one-time payment up to \$2,800 per acre and up to 100 percent of wetland restoration costs, or 30-year easements that pay up to \$2,100 per acre and up to 75 percent of the restoration costs. WRP also offers cost-share agreements to restore wetland functions and values without placing an easement on enrolled acres.

Dacey said fields that frequently flood and fields in which it is difficult to produce crops because of wet soils are good candidates for WRP.

"WRP is a great alternative for landowners with flood-prone fields or fields containing wet areas," he said. "By working with the natural tendencies of the land, they minimize cropping obstacles, improve the environment and still recognize economic gains."

To apply for WRP, or to get more information about it and other NRCS programs, contact the NRCS office at 636-922-2833, extension 3.

NRCS Marks 75 Years of Service to Landowners

Considering the fact that 70% of land in the United States is privately owned, establishing a federal agency to help those landowners protect important natural resources was a wise move. Now 75 years later, the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) is thriving in its efforts to provide planning and assistance to land owners to benefit soil, water, air, plants, and animals—resulting in productive lands and healthy ecosystems.

NRCS was founded April 27, 1935, as the Soil Conservation Service with Hugh Hammond Bennett named the first chief. Bennett is considered the "father of soil conservation". He looked to science and technology to improve agricultural practices and enhance conservation opportunities. His efforts are evident in today's NRCS of-

fices where employees combine education, technology, and growing partnerships with other agencies to offer landowners the best solutions to natural resource protection issues. NRCS employees work closely with farmers, ranchers, landowners, local conservation districts like the SWCD, and other state and federal agencies.

In Missouri, NRCS serves 114 counties with 400 employees. In St. Charles County, three full-time staff provide services for St. Charles and St. Louis Counties, and assist the Lincoln County office as well. The employees, Renee Cook, Shawn Keller, and Curtis Hoeft, have developed productive relationships with many landowners in the county, and are committed to providing personalized service to each client.

To get more information about NRCS programs, visit www.mo.nrcs.usda.gov or stop by the office at 160 St. Peters Centre Blvd., St. Peters Mo., 63376.

OPEN HOUSE

Come Join Your Local NRCS Staff to Celebrate the 75th Anniversary, and Learn About Programs
August 3, 2010
7:30—11:30 a.m.
USDA Service Center
160 St. Peters Centre Blvd.
St. Peters Mo., 63376
Coffee and Donuts Provided

The soil and water conservation district does not endorse nor recommend any of the vendors/contractors advertised in this newsletter, furthermore, any contractor/vendor that wishes to be added to the district's contractor/vendor list can be added upon request.

Trash by the Truckloads Pulled from Streams During Annual Event

The 2010 Clean Stream effort sponsored by Greenway Network and several municipalities in St. Charles County was a great success, measured by buckets of plastic, mounds of metal, yards of fabric, and tangles of other junk pulled from creeks and ditches. The county-wide event was held March 27, as volunteers set out to dozens of pre-chosen sites where creek beds and storm water ditches were scattered with litter. Volunteers of all ages were registered and given gloves and trash bags and then sent out to the sites. Groups worked together to pull tires from mud, dig appliances out with shovels, and pick up staggering amounts of litter. By noon, the volunteers were invited back to their registration sites for a lunch of hot dogs, chips and soda.



Sponsors included Greenway Network, St. Charles County, the Cities of Wentzville, Dardenne Prairie, O'Fallon, Lake St. Louis, St. Charles and St. Peters. Participants received a t-shirt to commemorate the day.

Black Walnut Quarantine Issued

Story Source: Michele Warmund, University of Missouri Extension

COLUMBIA, Mo. - While thousand cankers disease has not yet hit the state's black walnut industry, Missourians should take to heart the recent emergency quarantine issued for black walnut by the Missouri Department of Agriculture, said a University of Missouri Extension horticulturist.



"Everyone from commercial producers to the casual wood hobbyist should be aware of the quarantine and the damage that could result should the disease reach the state," said Michele Warmund.

Thousand cankers disease has devastated black walnut trees in at least nine western states: Washington, Oregon, California, Idaho, Utah, Arizona, New Mexico, Nevada and Colorado. According to Missouri Department of Agriculture estimates, the disease could cost the state more than \$850 million in losses over a 20-year period.

All walnut nursery stock, budwood, scionwood, green lumber, firewood and other living or dead plant material from those states is now prohibited in Missouri. This includes logs, stumps, roots, branches and composted and uncomposted chips.

Exceptions to this quarantine include nuts; kernels; hulls; bark-free, kiln-dried lumber with square edges; and finished wood products without bark, including walnut furniture, instruments and gunstock.

Any plant material or articles transported into Missouri in violation of the quarantine may be destroyed or returned to the point of origin. Penalties will be imposed on carriers of regulated material.

The disease is caused by a fungus that attaches to walnut twig beetles. These tiny bark beetles inflict very little damage themselves. The fungus, however, creates small patches of dead tissue under the bark. As these cankers grow and merge, nutrients can no longer move through the tree, killing it in one to three years.

"The first symptoms of the disease are leaf yellowing and branch dieback in the upper part of the tree," Warmund said. "Limb mortality occurs and eventually the whole tree dies."

The current emergency quarantine will expire in January. The development of a longer-term ruling is underway.

More information on the disease is available at <http://mda.mo.gov/plants/pests/thousandcankers.php>.

Deadline Extended for Popular Conservation Program

Missouri farmers and ranchers have until **June 25** to apply for enrollment into the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), a program that offers technical assistance and payments to operators who wish to improve their participation in conservation activities on their lands.

CSP addresses soil and water quality, soil erosion, air quality, and plant and animal resources, and is administered by the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS). It is open to all producers regardless of operation size, crops produced or geographic location; and potential applicants will be those who are currently participating in, and maintaining, a high level of conservation on their land and who want to adopt higher levels of stewardship.

CSP was authorized in the 2008 Farm Bill, and has been successful in protecting and enhancing natural resources that may have otherwise been lost. With so much land in private hands—as ranches and farms—its important to extend assistance to landowners who are in the best position to protect natural resources as part of their daily routine. A practice within the program may be as simple as rotating crops as designated by the NRCS staff assigned to assist the farmer, or restricting planting in field borders where wildlife is encouraged to shelter. Applicants meet with NRCS staff to determine the best program for the land. Those applicants are encouraged to first use the CSP self-screening checklist to determine if the program is suitable for their operations. The checklist highlights basic information about CSP eligibility requirements, contract obligations and potential payments. The checklist is available at the USDA Service Center, 160 St. Peters Centre Blvd., St. Peters, Mo., or at http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/new/_csp/csp.html.

While sign-up is continuous, applicants **must apply by June 25** in order to be eligible during the next round of funding. Call Renee Cook or Shawn Keller at 636-922-2833, ext. 3, for more information.

Pembroke High School to Represent Missouri at International Envirothon



Five young men from Pembroke High School near Kansas City will be representing the state of Missouri at the Canon International Envirothon to be held August 1-6, in Fresno, California. The team (pictured at left) beat out 18 other teams from across the state during the Missouri State Envirothon, held at Runge Nature Center near Jefferson City April 13.

The St. Louis Region sent three teams from the area: two

from Eureka High School and one from Parkway North High School. The local teams did very well, with Parkway coming in second place, and taking Forestry and Soils station awards. Eureka Team A placed third over-all, and Eureka Team B took sixth.



Pictured above are the members of the Parkway North High School Envirothon team who took second place at the Missouri State Envirothon. At left are the two Eureka High School teams and their coach, Dianne Johnson.



NRCS Welcomes LaShondra Hooks as Summer Intern

LaShondra Hooks, a 19 year old college junior from Fort Valley State University, Georgia, has joined the NRCS staff in St. Charles County as a summer intern. LaShondra will assist staff in both St. Charles and Lincoln Counties under the tutelage of Renee Cook, District Conservationist.

LaShondra, who is pursuing a degree in Agricultural Economics, said that her ultimate goal is to work in international trade. While her degree is in Ag Economics, she has a special focus in Environmental Economics.

"I felt that it would be best to have exposure to more than just one aspect of agriculture," she explained.

She chose to pursue an internship with NRCS because she has an interest in protecting natural resources. "Bettering our environment has always been a great passion of mine and NRCS is the type of agency that not only promotes environmental protection, but also takes steps to put proven conservation practices on the ground. I'm proud to know that what I learn with NRCS has the potential to cause great benefit to people and the land. I plan to take every advantage to learn all I can from these great people who really care about what is best for the environment."

LaShondra is the daughter of Mr. Earl and LaTonia Hooks of Marshallville, Ga., and is the youngest of five children.



LaShondra Hooks

Visit the University of Missouri Extension website for all kinds of useful information.

extension.missouri.edu

Current Ag Headlines include:

- Nitrogen Loss Beginning to Show for Farmers
- Managing Vineyard Pests
- Sign Up for Pest Alerts



Reporter

ST. CHARLES COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

160 St. Peters Centre Boulevard
St. Peters, MO 63376-1695

PRSR STD
U.S. Postage
PAID
St. Louis MO
Permit #495

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or a part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at 202-720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C., 20250-9410 or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Return Service
Requested

District Cost-Share Available for Various Resource Concerns

Allocations Announced

The Soil & Water Conservation District Cost-Share Program has undergone some changes over the past year due in part to a decrease in the state's Parks and Soils sales tax revenue. Because revenue remains down in the state, many soil and water districts have received a lower allocation than in previous years.

The following allocation was approved for St. Charles County, with a total allocation of \$28,589.89 for the period of July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2011.

Grazing Management: \$1,500

Includes all grazing system practices and DSP-2 Permanent Vegetative Cover Enhancement.

Irrigation Management: \$4,089.89

Includes all irrigation system practices, water conveyance, and drainage management.

Sensitive Areas: \$10,000

Includes field borders, filter strips, riparian for-

est buffers, stream protection, spring development, well decommissioning and stream bank stabilization.

Sheet, Rill and Gully: \$10,000

Includes: permanent vegetative establishment, permanent vegetative cover improvement, terrace systems with or without tiles, no-till systems, permanent vegetative cover for critical areas, water impoundment reservoirs, sediment retention, erosion or water control structures, sod waterways and diversions.

Woodland erosion: \$3,000

Includes: forest plantation, woodland protection through livestock exclusion, use exclusion, timber harvest plans and restoration of skid trails, logging roads, stream crossings and log landings.

2010 Cost-Share Numbers:

Last fiscal year, St. Charles County received an allocation of \$19,158.22 and had cost-share available for grazing management, streambank erosion, sensitive areas, woodland erosion, and sheet and rill erosion.

Districts Reduce Spending

Early this year, the Soil and Water Conservation Program office informed all 114 Missouri county districts that there would be a funding rescission for FY2010. According to a letter sent to each district, regular cost-share allocations to the districts would be reduced by two million dollars. The rescission was necessary due to a significant reduction in money collected through the 1/10 of one percent soils and parks tax.

In addition to the allocation reduction, districts are in a hiring freeze, and received instruction on reducing spending for research, computer assistance, equipment and expenses.

Business as Usual

In St. Charles County it is business as usual. The three-member staff which includes the district manager, a technician and an outreach specialist will continue to function in those roles. Cost-share to the district has not been significantly reduced due to the fact that the county has had low numbers in cost-share in previous years. However, it is important that the

district get this money "put on the ground" in the form of conservation practices and ensure that this county continues to get allocations appropriate to the resource needs identified. While St. Charles County is considered by some to be "mostly urban", there is still significant acreage dedicated to farming and many farm families still fully occupied with agriculture. St. Charles County can increase their share of allocations in upcoming years by spending all of the current allocation.

Contact Charlie Perkins at 636-922-2833, ext. 3, to learn more about available practices, and how you can help the land and related resources while continuing to farm.

Important Work

Now more than ever we are reminded how fragile our natural world can be. The whole world is focused on the Gulf of Mexico watching as oil discolors the tide and damages habitat. While this is a very obvious pollution, we sometimes neglect to "see" the real harm that pesticides, fertilizers, sediment and other pollutants do to our waterways. Keep in mind that where the Mississippi empties into the Gulf, there is a "dead zone" where aquatic life cannot survive—due mostly to agricultural and urban runoff in our state and others along the great North American rivers.

Everyone can do their part...homeowners, landowners, developers...to help keep pollutants out of our streams and waterways. That is where the District comes in. Let us help you devise a way to farm environmentally smart. Call 636-922-2833, ext. 3, and we can review your practices and determine the best way to enhance your operation while protecting vital natural resources.

Garden on the Contour

Home vegetable and flower gardens should be contoured to reduce erosion. Its good for your plants and good for your neighboring streams.

For information on how to keep your property safe from wildfires, log onto firewise.org

The mission of the Soil & Water Conservation District is to conserve the soil and water resources of the county; promote the wise use of these resources through education; protect residents from undue hardship caused by erosion, sedimentation and flooding; protect the agricultural soil base to ensure continued productivity; and preserve the quality of water and water courses within the county.

Reporter

ST. CHARLES COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

St. Charles County Supports District Goals

Through partnerships and the co-sponsoring of events, the county and the district provide information to county residents about storm water control, clean water resources and recycling—all in an effort to improve and protect water sources in the community.

Recent activities include:

The Quail Ridge Demonstration Rain Garden. Residents are invited to visit Quail Ridge County Park in Wentzville to see a rain garden that was constructed to capture storm water runoff from a pavilion. The hope is that residents will learn how to install a rain garden on their own properties, capturing runoff from their home rooftops. See the article on this page.

The NACD Stewardship Poster Contest. The county displayed the winning posters in the County Administrative Building on North Second Street in St. Charles during Earth Day and Stewardship Week.



Production of Informational Pamphlets: The SWCD produces two or three informational pamphlets each year for residents of the county. Topics have included an Educational Resource List, Yard Waste Disposal, and Storm Water Control.



Recycling: The county promotes recycling through two Recycle Works centers. The latest news is that both centers will now accept polystyrene foam (Styrofoam).

The Division of Environmental Health and Protection announced last month that EPC Inc., secured a grant from the St. Louis-Jefferson Solid Waste Management District to purchase a machine that compresses the foam into bricks that are one-sixteenth the size of the original material. EPC Inc., is working with the county to offer this service free of charge.



Recycle Works Central is located at 60 Triad South Drive in St. Charles. Recycle Works West is located at 2110 E. Pitman Ave., in Wentzville. For a list of accepted items, visit www.scchealth.org/es or call 636-949-7415.



Demonstration Rain Garden Installed at Quail Ridge

The St. Charles County SWCD partnered with the St. Louis SWCD and St. Charles County Parks to install a demonstration rain garden at Quail Ridge County Park in Wentzville, April 17. Community residents were invited to attend a brief workshop before the planting, where they learned the function and purpose of a rain garden. Details of determining slope, rain garden size and plant selection were also presented.

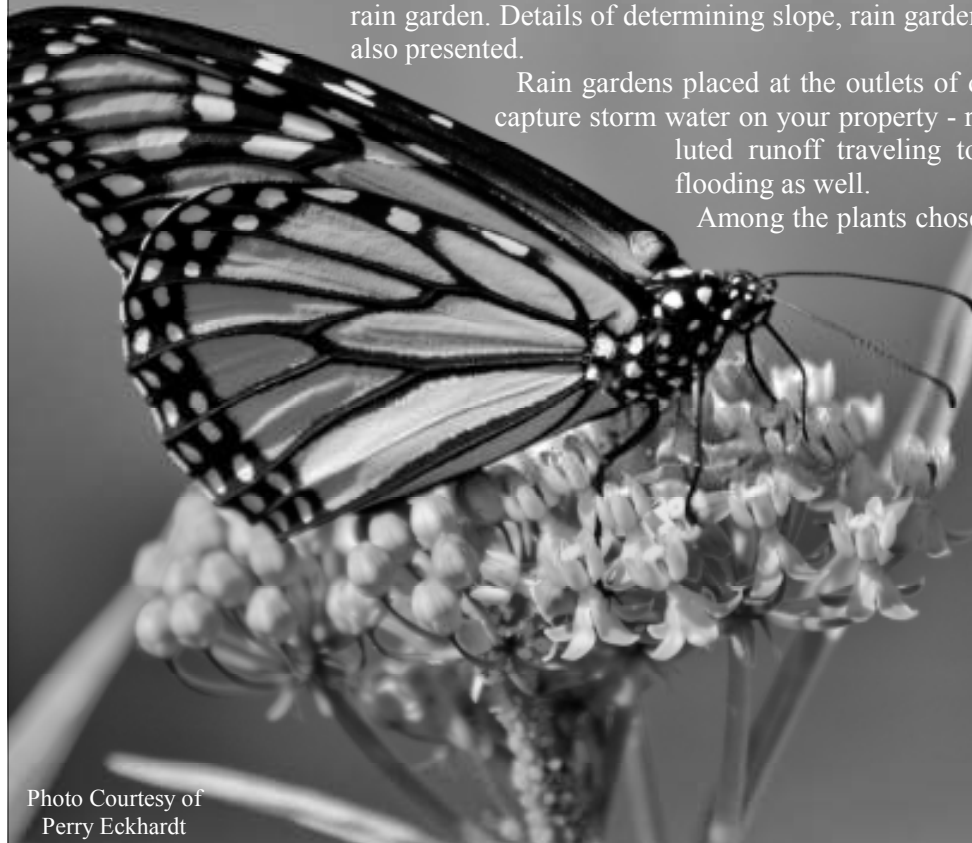


Photo Courtesy of Perry Eckhardt

Rain gardens placed at the outlets of downspouts are a wise way to capture storm water on your property - reducing the possibility of polluted runoff traveling to area streams, and reducing flooding as well.

Among the plants chosen for this project were Black-eyed Susan, Shining Blue Star, Rose Turtlehead, Copper Iris, Fringed Sedge and Fox Sedge. After an unusually heavy rainfall, the garden proved to be doing its job, slowing down the runoff and allowing it to seep slowly back into the soil.

The rain garden will serve as a permanent demonstration for county residents to visit and learn how to construct their own rain gardens.



The Rain Garden site was chosen to capture storm water coming off a pavilion in the park. The soil was amended with sand and compost, and the border was laid out (left). Carol Grote of the University of Missouri Extension's Master Gardeners spoke to the group about wise plant choices (right). Planting was quick work with many hands (below, right). After a heavy rain, it was obvious that the garden was doing its job (below).



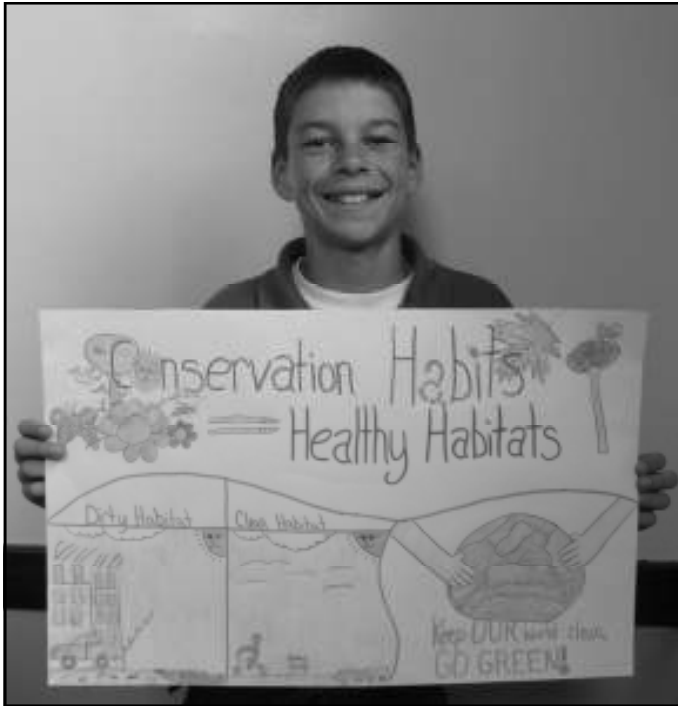
Cost-share Dollars Available for FY2010

The St. Charles County Soil & Water Conservation District has received an allocation of \$28,589.89 for FY2011. Farmers and Landowners can apply for these funds through the cost-share program, which assists landowners and operators in putting soil conservation and water quality practices on the ground. This important work results in a partnership between the SWCD and landowners in an effort to preserve productive soil and clean water, and in the process improve the environment for plants, animals and people.

See Page 4 for a description of Resource Concerns and Cost-Share Practices... and How You Can Participate.



Students Win Prizes in Poster Contest



Charlie Weston (left), a sixth-grader at All Saints Catholic School in St. Peters, created the grand prize winning poster for the annual Stewardship Poster Contest, sponsored locally by the Soil and Water District. Charlie's poster will be entered in a statewide contest as part of the National Association of Conservation District's annual contest.

This year's theme is "Conservation Habits = Health Habitats". St. Charles County students in grades 4, 5, and 6 were invited to create a poster depicting the theme with both words and pictures. One hundred posters were submitted, with the top winning students pictured below. Winners received cash prizes, and all participants received lollipops and pencils.

The posters were on display at the County Administrative Building during Conservation Stewardship Week and Earth Day.



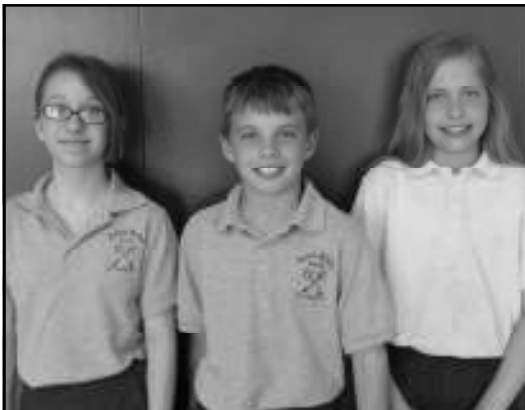
St. Charles Borromeo School student winners are: (from left) Anna Gerstenkorn, third place for fourth grade; Michael Jones, third place for sixth grade; McKenzie Gross, second place for sixth grade; and Colleen Schuchardt with Best in School.



Miranda Gerringer (right) earned first place for sixth grade entrants, and Madison Peine was awarded Best in School. Both girls attend All Saints in St. Peters.



St. Joachim and Ann student winners are: (from left) Danny Geringer, first place; Nick Lovett, Best in School; Abby Naumann, second place; and Olivia Kaufmann, third place. All are fifth grade students.



Dylan Wright (center) took first place for fourth grade. Sixth-grader Ashley Wingerter (left) was awarded Best in School, and Laura Maxwell took second place for fourth grade. All are students at St. Peter School in St. Charles.

News



Energize Missouri has 1,800 Applicants for new program

The state's Division of Energy recently announced that there were 1,800 applicants across the state for the Energize Missouri Agriculture program, a new cost-share grant that encourages and aids farmers in installing energy saving practices and equipment on their farms.

There is \$3,000,000 budgeted for the program, but there was \$6,800,000 requested by applicants. The Technical Review Team for the program will determine which applicants will receive the grants. Farmers will be notified by mail during the month of June.

\$25 Million to Restore Wetlands

The USDA's Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) has more than \$25 million to help Missouri landowners restore wetlands.

Most of the available funds are part of a \$175 million package announced May 14 by Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack that will restore about 75,000 acres of wetlands in 22 states through NRCS's Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP).

Missouri's portion of the funding is expected to help landowners add 9,200 acres to the state's 800,000 acres of wetlands. Last year, WRP easements totaling \$5.9 million were approved that will restore 3,025 acres of wetlands in Missouri.

"We are hoping to significantly increase WRP applications this year," said Kevin Dacey, Missouri NRCS natural resources specialist. "More people are becoming interested in taking advantage of the Wetlands Reserve Program as an opportunity to convert marginal farmland, and we want to assist them in a timely manner."

Wetlands are areas saturated by water all or most of the year. Often called "nature's kidneys," wetlands naturally filter contaminants out of the water. Wetlands also recharge groundwater; reduce flooding and soil erosion; support diverse populations of wildlife, plants and fish; improve aesthetics; and offer recreational opportunities.

At one time, wetlands covered 4.8 million acres of Missouri, primarily in the "Bootheel" region of southeastern Missouri. They began to decline in the late 1800s amid competing land uses, and today 800,000 acres remain. That total includes more than 130,000 acres of wetlands that have been restored in Missouri through WRP.

WRP provides technical and financial assistance to eligible landowners to increase wetlands. The voluntary program strives to achieve the greatest wetland functions and values and to receive optimum wildlife habitat benefits on every acre enrolled. WRP participants limit their future use of the land, but retain private ownership.

Participating landowners can select permanent easements that provide a one-time payment up to \$2,800 per acre and up to 100 percent of wetland restoration costs, or 30-year easements that pay up to \$2,100 per acre and up to 75 percent of the restoration costs. WRP also offers cost-share agreements to restore wetland functions and values without placing an easement on enrolled acres.

Dacey said fields that frequently flood and fields in which it is difficult to produce crops because of wet soils are good candidates for WRP.

"WRP is a great alternative for landowners with flood-prone fields or fields containing wet areas," he said. "By working with the natural tendencies of the land, they minimize cropping obstacles, improve the environment and still recognize economic gains."

To apply for WRP, or to get more information about it and other NRCS programs, contact the NRCS office at 636-922-2833, extension 3.

NRCS Marks 75 Years of Service to Landowners

Considering the fact that 70% of land in the United States is privately owned, establishing a federal agency to help those landowners protect important natural resources was a wise move. Now 75 years later, the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) is thriving in its efforts to provide planning and assistance to land owners to benefit soil, water, air, plants, and animals—resulting in productive lands and healthy ecosystems.

NRCS was founded April 27, 1935, as the Soil Conservation Service with Hugh Hammond Bennett named the first chief. Bennett is considered the "father of soil conservation". He looked to science and technology to improve agricultural practices and enhance conservation opportunities. His efforts are evident in today's NRCS of-

fices where employees combine education, technology, and growing partnerships with other agencies to offer landowners the best solutions to natural resource protection issues. NRCS employees work closely with farmers, ranchers, landowners, local conservation districts like the SWCD, and other state and federal agencies.

In Missouri, NRCS serves 114 counties with 400 employees. In St. Charles County, three full-time staff provide services for St. Charles and St. Louis Counties, and assist the Lincoln County office as well. The employees, Renee Cook, Shawn Keller, and Curtis Hoeft, have developed productive relationships with many landowners in the county, and are committed to providing personalized service to each client.

To get more information about NRCS programs, visit www.mo.nrcs.usda.gov or stop by the office at 160 St. Peters Centre Blvd., St. Peters Mo., 63376.

OPEN HOUSE

Come Join Your Local NRCS Staff to Celebrate the 75th Anniversary, and Learn About Programs
August 3, 2010
7:30—11:30 a.m.
USDA Service Center
160 St. Peters Centre Blvd.
St. Peters Mo., 63376
Coffee and Donuts Provided

The soil and water conservation district does not endorse nor recommend any of the vendors/contractors advertised in this newsletter, furthermore, any contractor/vendor that wishes to be added to the district's contractor/vendor list can be added upon request.

Trash by the Truckloads Pulled from Streams During Annual Event

The 2010 Clean Stream effort sponsored by Greenway Network and several municipalities in St. Charles County was a great success, measured by buckets of plastic, mounds of metal, yards of fabric, and tangles of other junk pulled from creeks and ditches. The county-wide event was held March 27, as volunteers set out to dozens of pre-chosen sites where creek beds and storm water ditches were scattered with litter. Volunteers of all ages were registered and given gloves and trash bags and then sent out to the sites. Groups worked together to pull tires from mud, dig appliances out with shovels, and pick up staggering amounts of litter. By noon, the volunteers were invited back to their registration sites for a lunch of hot dogs, chips and soda.



Sponsors included Greenway Network, St. Charles County, the Cities of Wentzville, Dardenne Prairie, O'Fallon, Lake St. Louis, St. Charles and St. Peters. Participants received a t-shirt to commemorate the day.

Black Walnut Quarantine Issued

Story Source: Michele Warmund, University of Missouri Extension

COLUMBIA, Mo. - While thousand cankers disease has not yet hit the state's black walnut industry, Missourians should take to heart the recent emergency quarantine issued for black walnut by the Missouri Department of Agriculture, said a University of Missouri Extension horticulturist.



"Everyone from commercial producers to the casual wood hobbyist should be aware of the quarantine and the damage that could result should the disease reach the state," said Michele Warmund.

Thousand cankers disease has devastated black walnut trees in at least nine western states: Washington, Oregon, California, Idaho, Utah, Arizona, New Mexico, Nevada and Colorado. According to Missouri Department of Agriculture estimates, the disease could cost the state more than \$850 million in losses over a 20-year period.

All walnut nursery stock, budwood, scionwood, green lumber, firewood and other living or dead plant material from those states is now prohibited in Missouri. This includes logs, stumps, roots, branches and composted and uncomposted chips.

Exceptions to this quarantine include nuts; kernels; hulls; bark-free, kiln-dried lumber with square edges; and finished wood products without bark, including walnut furniture, instruments and gunstock.

Any plant material or articles transported into Missouri in violation of the quarantine may be destroyed or returned to the point of origin. Penalties will be imposed on carriers of regulated material.

The disease is caused by a fungus that attaches to walnut twig beetles. These tiny bark beetles inflict very little damage themselves. The fungus, however, creates small patches of dead tissue under the bark. As these cankers grow and merge, nutrients can no longer move through the tree, killing it in one to three years.

"The first symptoms of the disease are leaf yellowing and branch dieback in the upper part of the tree," Warmund said. "Limb mortality occurs and eventually the whole tree dies."

The current emergency quarantine will expire in January. The development of a longer-term ruling is underway.

More information on the disease is available at <http://mda.mo.gov/plants/pests/thousandcankers.php>.

Deadline Extended for Popular Conservation Program

Missouri farmers and ranchers have until **June 25** to apply for enrollment into the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), a program that offers technical assistance and payments to operators who wish to improve their participation in conservation activities on their lands.

CSP addresses soil and water quality, soil erosion, air quality, and plant and animal resources, and is administered by the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS). It is open to all producers regardless of operation size, crops produced or geographic location; and potential applicants will be those who are currently participating in, and maintaining, a high level of conservation on their land and who want to adopt higher levels of stewardship.

CSP was authorized in the 2008 Farm Bill, and has been successful in protecting and enhancing natural resources that may have otherwise been lost. With so much land in private hands—as ranches and farms—its important to extend assistance to landowners who are in the best position to protect natural resources as part of their daily routine. A practice within the program may be as simple as rotating crops as designated by the NRCS staff assigned to assist the farmer, or restricting planting in field borders where wildlife is encouraged to shelter. Applicants meet with NRCS staff to determine the best program for the land. Those applicants are encouraged to first use the CSP self-screening checklist to determine if the program is suitable for their operations. The checklist highlights basic information about CSP eligibility requirements, contract obligations and potential payments. The checklist is available at the USDA Service Center, 160 St. Peters Centre Blvd., St. Peters, Mo., or at http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/new/_csp/csp.html.

While sign-up is continuous, applicants **must apply by June 25** in order to be eligible during the next round of funding. Call Renee Cook or Shawn Keller at 636-922-2833, ext. 3, for more information.

Pembroke High School to Represent Missouri at International Envirothon



Five young men from Pembroke High School near Kansas City will be representing the state of Missouri at the Canon International Envirothon to be held August 1-6, in Fresno, California. The team (pictured at left) beat out 18 other teams from across the state during the Missouri State Envirothon, held at Runge Nature Center near Jefferson City April 13.

The St. Louis Region sent three teams from the area: two

from Eureka High School and one from Parkway North High School. The local teams did very well, with Parkway coming in second place, and taking Forestry and Soils station awards. Eureka Team A placed third over-all, and Eureka Team B took sixth.



Pictured above are the members of the Parkway North High School Envirothon team who took second place at the Missouri State Envirothon. At left are the two Eureka High School teams and their coach, Dianne Johnson.



NRCS Welcomes LaShondra Hooks as Summer Intern

LaShondra Hooks, a 19 year old college junior from Fort Valley State University, Georgia, has joined the NRCS staff in St. Charles County as a summer intern. LaShondra will assist staff in both St. Charles and Lincoln Counties under the tutelage of Renee Cook, District Conservationist.

LaShondra, who is pursuing a degree in Agricultural Economics, said that her ultimate goal is to work in international trade. While her degree is in Ag Economics, she has a special focus in Environmental Economics.

"I felt that it would be best to have exposure to more than just one aspect of agriculture," she explained.

She chose to pursue an internship with NRCS because she has an interest in protecting natural resources. "Bettering our environment has always been a great passion of mine and NRCS is the type of agency that not only promotes environmental protection, but also takes steps to put proven conservation practices on the ground. I'm proud to know that what I learn with NRCS has the potential to cause great benefit to people and the land. I plan to take every advantage to learn all I can from these great people who really care about what is best for the environment."

LaShondra is the daughter of Mr. Earl and LaTonia Hooks of Marshallville, Ga., and is the youngest of five children.



LoShondra Hooks

Visit the University of Missouri Extension website for all kinds of useful information.

extension.missouri.edu

Current Ag Headlines include:

- Nitrogen Loss Beginning to Show for Farmers
- Managing Vineyard Pests
- Sign Up for Pest Alerts



Reporter

ST. CHARLES COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

160 St. Peters Centre Boulevard
St. Peters, MO 63376-1695

PRSRT STD
U.S. Postage
PAID
St. Louis MO
Permit #495

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or a part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at 202-720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C., 20250-9410 or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Return Service
Requested

District Cost-Share Available for Various Resource Concerns

Allocations Announced

The Soil & Water Conservation District Cost-Share Program has undergone some changes over the past year due in part to a decrease in the state's Parks and Soils sales tax revenue. Because revenue remains down in the state, many soil and water districts have received a lower allocation than in previous years.

The following allocation was approved for St. Charles County, with a total allocation of \$28,589.89 for the period of July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2011.

Grazing Management: \$1,500

Includes all grazing system practices and DSP-2 Permanent Vegetative Cover Enhancement.

Irrigation Management: \$4,089.89

Includes all irrigation system practices, water conveyance, and drainage management.

Sensitive Areas: \$10,000

Includes field borders, filter strips, riparian for-

est buffers, stream protection, spring development, well decommissioning and stream bank stabilization.

Sheet, Rill and Gully: \$10,000

Includes: permanent vegetative establishment, permanent vegetative cover improvement, terrace systems with or without tiles, no-till systems, permanent vegetative cover for critical areas, water impoundment reservoirs, sediment retention, erosion or water control structures, sod waterways and diversions.

Woodland erosion: \$3,000

Includes: forest plantation, woodland protection through livestock exclusion, use exclusion, timber harvest plans and restoration of skid trails, logging roads, stream crossings and log landings.

2010 Cost-Share Numbers:

Last fiscal year, St. Charles County received an allocation of \$19,158.22 and had cost-share available for grazing management, streambank erosion, sensitive areas, woodland erosion, and sheet and rill erosion.

Districts Reduce Spending

Early this year, the Soil and Water Conservation Program office informed all 114 Missouri county districts that there would be a funding rescission for FY2010. According to a letter sent to each district, regular cost-share allocations to the districts would be reduced by two million dollars. The rescission was necessary due to a significant reduction in money collected through the 1/10 of one percent soils and parks tax.

In addition to the allocation reduction, districts are in a hiring freeze, and received instruction on reducing spending for research, computer assistance, equipment and expenses.

Business as Usual

In St. Charles County it is business as usual. The three-member staff which includes the district manager, a technician and an outreach specialist will continue to function in those roles. Cost-share to the district has not been significantly reduced due to the fact that the county has had low numbers in cost-share in previous years. However, it is important that the

district get this money "put on the ground" in the form of conservation practices and ensure that this county continues to get allocations appropriate to the resource needs identified. While St. Charles County is considered by some to be "mostly urban", there is still significant acreage dedicated to farming and many farm families still fully occupied with agriculture. St. Charles County can increase their share of allocations in upcoming years by spending all of the current allocation.

Contact Charlie Perkins at 636-922-2833, ext. 3, to learn more about available practices, and how you can help the land and related resources while continuing to farm.

Important Work

Now more than ever we are reminded how fragile our natural world can be. The whole world is focused on the Gulf of Mexico watching as oil discolors the tide and damages habitat. While this is a very obvious pollution, we sometimes neglect to "see" the real harm that pesticides, fertilizers, sediment and other pollutants do to our waterways. Keep in mind that where the Mississippi empties into the Gulf, there is a "dead zone" where aquatic life cannot survive—due mostly to agricultural and urban runoff in our state and others along the great North American rivers.

Everyone can do their part...homeowners, landowners, developers...to help keep pollutants out of our streams and waterways. That is where the District comes in. Let us help you devise a way to farm environmentally smart. Call 636-922-2833, ext. 3, and we can review your practices and determine the best way to enhance your operation while protecting vital natural resources.

Garden on the Contour

Home vegetable and flower gardens should be contoured to reduce erosion. Its good for your plants and good for your neighboring streams.

For information on how to keep your property safe from wildfires, log onto firewise.org

The mission of the Soil & Water Conservation District is to conserve the soil and water resources of the county; promote the wise use of these resources through education; protect residents from undue hardship caused by erosion, sedimentation and flooding; protect the agricultural soil base to ensure continued productivity; and preserve the quality of water and water courses within the county.